

LITERARY NOTES.

By way of establishing the proposition that because a book is popular it does not follow that it has permanent value, "The Critic" says: "One of the most popular writers of our green and salubrious days was Mistress Fanny Fern. Her 'Fern Leaves' had a sale of nearly 100,000 copies, her 'Ruth Hall' of 55,000, and her 'Shady Side' of 46,000. Few books of their day equalled them in popularity. But where, oh! where are they to-day? Out of print and out of remembrance of everyone of them. Another famous literary woman of a generation ago was Fanny Forester—in those days our literature was prolific in Fanny Ferns and Fanny Foresters and Minnie Myrtles—whose collected writings, in a two-volume edition bearing the title of "Adelbrook," had a sale of 35,000 copies; and the biography of the amiable writer found 15,000 purchasers. Still another widely-known writer was Miss Cummins, whose "Lamp-lighter" had a circulation of nearly or quite 100,000."

Messrs. Cupples, Upham & Co. have just published, in pamphlet form, a lecture on "The Art of Fiction," delivered before the Royal Institution, by Mr. Walter Besant.

James D. Brown, Mitchell Librarian of Glasgow, is preparing a "Biographical Dictionary of Musicians," the Fall Mall Gazette" reports that "all composers of standing are to receive adequate notice in it, and the almost unworked field of American musical biography will be taken into account." The book will also treat of the literature of "Theory"; and the principal collections of carols, catches, psalmody, songs, etc., will be dealt with.

Messrs. Estes & Lauriat are to publish a revised edition of ex-Governor John D. Long's translation of the gospels of Virgil.

"The Union," a poem which George Edgar Montgomery contributed a few years ago to "Harper's Bazaar," has been set to music by him, and will shortly be published by William A. Pond & Co.

A third edition of Samuel P. Bates's "Battle of Chancellorsville" will shortly be published.

McPherson's "Hand-book of Politics for 1884" covers the field from August 9, 1882, to the adjournment of last session of Congress. It is the ninth volume of the series.

Ben Jonson's own copy of the "Faerie Queen," was lately sold at auction in London for a handsome sum. It contains marginal notes in rare Ben's own handwriting. At one recent London book sale 2900 was paid for a chronicle of early Norman history. The chronicle is described as being written in beautiful manuscript on 257 yellow leaves, and embellished with pictures and designs of unusual beauty.

Mr. George J. Romane, author of "Mental Evolution in Animals," is now engaged on a companion volume on "Mental Evolution in Man." The object of Mr. Romane's former book was to establish that the principles of evolution apply to the phenomena of mind in the lower animals. In his new book he will seek to show that man's power of thinking about abstractions has also been arrived at by a process of evolution.

S. M. Watson, librarian of the Portland City Library, is the Editor of "The Maine Historical and Genealogical Recorder," the first number of which has just been issued. There is always room for such a publication, and this one is sure to receive a hearty welcome. The initial issue contains, among other interesting articles, "The King Family of Maine," with a heliotype of William King the first Governor of the State. The magazine will appear quarterly.

James Payn, in his "Literary Recollections," now in course of publication earnestly advises young authors not to publish their works anonymously. "If one," he wisely says, "has any personality belonging to one (whether it is spelt with an i or not) it is just as well to claim it, otherwise some one is sure to do so."

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